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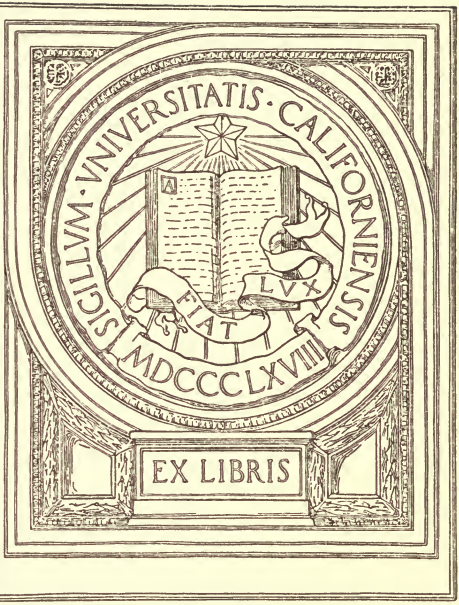
BILLY BAXTER'S LETTERS

by

Wm J. KOUNTZ Jr.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BILLY BAXTER'S LETTERS

WM. J. KOUNTZ, JR.
(BILLY BAXTER)

BILLY BAXTER'S LETTERS

BY

WM. J. KOUNTZ, JR.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

THE RED RAVEN CORPORATION

RED RAVEN, PA.

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PREFACE TO 1913 EDITION

In presenting a new edition of Billy Baxter's Letters we need only refer the reader to the original preface, which sets forth the circumstances surrounding the initial publication.

Billy Baxter claimed, for his slang, that it was up to date, but time has proven that it was far in advance of date, only because many of the expressions used in Billy Baxter's Letters did not come into common use until upwards of ten years after the publication of the famous stories.

We offer this re-issue of Billy Baxter's Letters to our American friends in the hope that it will come with as much sunshine to the present generation as the original edition did to the past.

THE RED RAVEN CORPORATION.

PREFACE
(Original)

In presenting this work, we believe that an explanation is due the reader as to why the letters are given in their present form at this time.

The first book published, "One Night," was "issued by The Duquesne Distributing Company (now known as The Red Raven Corporation) to show its great love for the American people, and to incidentally advertise the 'R—R—S—.'" Its success was immediate.

"In Society" appeared February 1, 1899, and scored as promptly as "One Night." The demand for the booklets was phenomenal, and Mr. Kountz received thousands of friendly letters applauding him for his humor. He also received flattering offers from the

leading comic weeklies, the metropolitan dailies, and great advertisers throughout the Union. He declined them all, being primarily a business man, and carrying literature only as a side line.

On May 1st "In Love" was given to the public, with the promise that "In New York" would follow on October 1st. On the evening of August 9th, William J. Kountz, Jr., turned to the writer of this preface, and referring to "In New York," said: "Well, I'm through, all but going over it." He never returned to his office, and on August 18th he died in the room where he was born not quite thirty-two years before.

We then conceived the idea of putting the letters out in their present form, as a last tribute to the author, who in less than a year's work lifted himself into a place among the nation's humorists.

We have reproduced only such of

the prefaces and advertisements as have been widely discussed for their humorous quality, and which the author's friends insisted should not be omitted.

The two heretofore unmentioned letters were discovered after the author's death, and are published in the rough, as they were found. "Out Hunting" is based on a trip which actually took place, and from personal knowledge contains a good deal of fact. It was doubtless written before "One Night," and for that reason is given priority in the arrangement.

"Johnny Black's Girl" is merely a scrap, and is inserted as such. It shows, however, that the author had a tear for pity as well as an eye for the ridiculous.

GEO. MCC. KOUNTZ.

OUT HUNTING

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

"HOW THEY DID IN A PLAY"

OUT HUNTING

PITTSBURG, September 1, 1898.

DEAR JIM:

I am just back from St. Paul, where I spent a couple of days with Teddy Worthington. Teddy and Bud Hathaway of Chicago were going on a shooting trip in the Big Woods of Minnesota, and they asked me to go with them. It was new deal for me, so of course I was for it. I hired a hammerless breech-loader for seven a week, borrowed a lot of fishing-tackle, and bought a hunting-knife with a nickel-plated handle. It was a beaut, and stood me three fifty. A fellow can never be too careful. Up there you are likely any minute to come face to face with an Apache or some old

left-over Aztec rubbering around among the trees.

At the last minute Bud Hathaway's father had to die, so just Teddy and myself went. After we left the train we rode twenty miles in a wagon to Freshwater Lake, which was our destination. The house where we stayed was kept by a half-breed guide named Sarpo, and with him lived his two sons and his second wife, who was a young white girl, and not a bad looker at that.

The next morning we started out after ducks. I made a horrible bluff that I was one of the old boys at the business, and that I was on to everything—till it came to loading my hammerless, and there's where I went to the bad. I couldn't get the blamed thing open. Teddy handed me a few of his kind little remarks, and I got back at him with something personal. He got sore. No thoroughbred kidder would have grown personal, but I

couldn't think of anything else at the time. There was nothing stirring in the duck line, and for two hours we sat all hunched up in a little boat among a lot of weeds. It was getting to be a sad affair for me, and I was thinking of Atlantic City, and the bands of music, and the swell dances, and trying to figure where these hunters have the fun they are always coming home and talking about, when suddenly along came a drove of ducks. On the square, there must have been a million. The other members of the party began picking them off, but your Uncle Bill is one of those wise shooters. I waited till they were right over my head. Say! they were so thick I couldn't see the sky. I let go with the first barrel, right into the center of the bunch. Nit duck. Then the second barrel went off of its own accord. I'll swear, Jim, I had nothing whatever to do with it. Anyway, nit duck. I think if I'd had

three barrels on that gun I would have nailed a duck, a duck and a half, or two ducks, as I was just getting good. I loaded up, and I must have been flustered a bit, as I blew one of the decoys clear into the next block.

Then things again assumed their usual hunter's attitude, and after sitting for another hour we paddled over to our sail-boat and started down the lake for the house. It was blowing pretty hard, and the sky was blacker than Pittsburg. The skipper said something about a squall, but it didn't hit us until we were about two hundred yards from the dock. Then we got it, and got it good. It was buttercups and daisies. Thunder, lightning, rain, and all the side dishes. I'd have given eight dollars to have seen a cable car coming along about that time. The skipper yelled to me to ease off the larboard stay. Now, I might know something about mince pie, but a larboard stay is not my long

and hasty. Then some one pushed me aside, and succeeded in putting things in such excellent shape that we ran plumb through the dock. It was great!

That night we sat around, and Sarpo and his sons told some funny stories. My, but they were to the saddings! I told one of my best, and nobody filtered but Teddy.

The next morning at five we took the dogs and started out after deer. They have what they call run-ways or deer passes, and the deer always go the same route. They ought to have better sense, although as far as I am concerned they are perfectly safe. They put me on one of the passes, behind a lot of underbrush. Well, I sat and sat until I went to sleep, but I slept with one eye open. Deadwood Dick and all the great scouts and trappers had the one-eye-open habit. I was awakened by hearing something crack, and there standing about

twenty feet away with its side turned to me was a deer. It must have belonged to the fair sex, as it had no horns. Talk about shaking! I would have shaken my best friend. I finally pulled myself together, and remembering the ducks, I let her have both barrels at once. She kicked her feet up in the air, turned her head, and on the level, she gave me the laugh and cut into the woods. I believe she saw me all the time, and knew I was a lobster.

On the way back I met the half-breed, and we walked together. On reaching the house we happened to glance through the window, and there was Teddy with his arm around the young wife's waist. Teddy always was a rubber. It was lovely cards for a while, and Teddy worked the old gag that he was showing her how they did in a play, but she wasn't wise enough to follow it up, so we had to leave.

While returning on the train I made the horrible discovery that I had been using my buckshot on the ducks and my birdshot on the deer. I can see how the deer got away, but I'll say one thing, and that is, that if a passing duck had ever reached his mitt out for one of those buckshot he would have thought Rusie was doing the pitching. He would have got it fine and daisy.

I am not for the country. They have ticks, jiggers, and gnats, all doing a nice conservative business at once. You never had a tick on you, did you, Jim? Well, a tick is a very busy little cup of tea. First, he'll crawl all over you, and then select a spot on the back directly between the shoulder blades, where you can't reach him. I talked to a man who was up on ticks, and he said a tick was wiser than a bedbug. Now, you take a bedbug whose head is perfectly clear, and who hasn't been drinking

or smoking too much, and there won't be many men on Wall Street much wiser than he is. Well, after a tick gets his place picked out, he burrows in under the skin, then dies and festers. You wouldn't catch a bedbug standing for that martyr game.

There should be some kind of a law against gnats. About two hundred of them will stay right in front of your eyes until one of them gets an opening; then he'll cut in and land a jab, and the other hundred and ninety-nine will give you the Big Minnehaha. I had so many lumps on me when I got back to St. Paul that they called me Pneumatic Willie.

Talk about your sylvan dells and sweet-scented fragrance! Why, an asphalt street has a sylvan dell skinned to death, and a twelve-per-cent soap factory is sweet enough for me.

Yours as ever,

BILLY.

P. S.—Good night. I am for the sleeps.

ONE NIGHT

A KIND OF A PREFACE

The Baxter Letters are written in the up-to-date slang of the day, by one who has seen several of the sides of life, and who has also come in contact with a few of the corners.

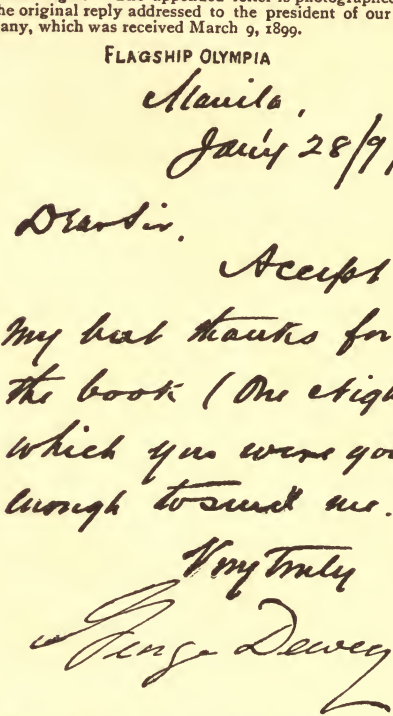
We will mail "One Night" to any address in North America upon receipt of four cents* in postage. Do not lick stamps and attach to letter of request, as at some future date we may wish to use same, and the Government foolishly requires a whole stamp.

As there are several people in the United States with whom we are not personally acquainted, and not being mind-readers, we ask that all signatures be written plainly.

*This offer is superseded by the publication of this volume.

Admiral Dewey's Letter

In November, 1898, we sent Admiral Dewey a copy of "One Night." The appended letter is photographed from the original reply addressed to the president of our company, which was received March 9, 1899.



FLAGSHIP OLYMPIA

Manila,
Jany 28/99.

Dear Sir.

Accept
my best thanks for
the book (One night)
which you were good
enough to send me.

Very Truly
Geo Dewey

We also sent a copy to His Royal Highness, Albert, Prince of Wales, and having heard nothing from him, it now looks as though Al were going to snub us. Under the circumstances, when he runs for King we can't be for him.

"SAY, WAITER, PLEASE LOOK AS PLEASANT AS POSSIBLE"

ONE NIGHT

PITTSBURG, PA., August, 189–.

DEAR JIM:

You remember I wrote you about a sack suit I ordered last week. Well, it came yesterday, and you know the finish. Why can't a fellow put on a new suit, make a few calls, and go home like a gentleman? The minute I got into that suit, I fell off the water wagon with an awful bump, although I hadn't touched a drink for thirty-seven days. Oh! But I got a lovely bun on. That's the last. No more for me. There's nothing in it. If anybody says, "Have something, Billy," you'll see your Uncle Bill take to the trees.

Yesterday at 2:30 I had a hundred

and ten dollars; this morning I'm there with a dollar eighty, and that's the draw out of a two-dollar touch. If there is any truth in the old saying that money talks, I am certainly deaf and dumb to-day. Besides, I have a card in my pocket which says I've opened up a running account of thirty-two forty at George's place. I wonder if this George is on the level, because I'll swear I don't think I was in there at all. I'll bet he stuck the forty on, anyway. You know me, Jim; I am one of those bright people who tries to keep up with a lot of guys who have nothing to do but blow their coin. I stood around yesterday and looked wise, and licked up about four high-balls; then I kind of stretched. Whenever I give one of those little stretches and swell up a bit, that's a sign I am commencing to get wealthy. I switched over and took a couple of gin fizzes, and then it hit me I was richer than Jay Gould ever was; I had

the Rothschilds backed clear off the board; and I made William H. Vanderbilt look like a hundred-to-one shot. You understand, Jim, this was yesterday. I got a little red spot in each cheek, and then I leaned over the bar and whispered, "Mr. Bartender, break a bottle of that Pommery." Ordinarily I call the booze clerk by his first name, but when you are cutting into the grape at four dollars per, you always want to say Mr. Bartender, and you should always whisper, or just nod your head each time you open a new bottle, as it makes it appear as though you were accustomed to ordering wine. You see, Jim, that's where I go off my dip. That wine affair is an awful stunt for a fellow who makes not over two thousand a year, carries ten thousand life, and rooms in a flat that's fifteen a month stronger than he can stand. But to continue, I lost the push I started out with, and got mixed up

with a fellow named Thorne, or Thorpe, or something like that, and we got along great for a while. He knew a lot of fellows in Boston that I did, and every time we struck a new mutual friend we opened another bottle. I don't know just what the total population of Boston is, but we must have known everybody there. Finally Thorne got to crying because his mother had died. You know I am a good fellow, so I cried too. I always cry some time during a bat, and there was an opening for your life. I cried so hard that the bartender had to ask me to stop three different times. I made Niobe look like a two-spot. Between sobs I asked him about the sad affair, and found that his mother had died when he was born. I guess it had just struck him. Then there were doings.

I had wasted a wad of cries that would float the Maine, and I was sore for fair. A fat fellow cut into the

argument, and some one soaked him in the eye, and then, as they say in Texas, "there was three minutes rough house." In the general bustle a seedy looking man pinched the Fresh Air Fund, box and all. You know I'm not much for the bat cave, and to avoid such after-complications as patrol wagons and things, I blew the bunch and started up street. I guess the wind must have been against me, as I was tacking.

I met Johnny Black, and he was going to keep a date with a couple of swell heiresses at one of the hotel dining-rooms. I saw them on the street to-day, and they won't do. One of them wore an amethyst ring that weighed about sixty carats, and the other had on white slippers covered with little beads.

I don't know anything about them, but I'll gamble that they are the kind of people that have pictures of the family and wreaths in the parlor.

They looked fine and daisy last night, though. Probably the grape. My girl's name was Estelle. Wouldn't that scald you? Estelle handed me a lot of talk about having seen me on the street for the last two years, and how she had always been dying to meet me, and I got swelled up and bought wine like a horse owner. Johnny was shaking his head and motioning for me to chop, but what cared I? Estelle was saying, "He done it," "I seen it," and "Usen't you?" right along, but the grape stood for everything.

Estelle's friend was talking about her piano, and how hard it was to get good servants nowadays, and say, Jim, I've heard knockers in my time, but Estelle is the original leader of the anvil chorus. She just put everybody in town on the pan and roasted them to a whisper. She could build the best battleship Dewey ever saw with her little hammer. Estelle's friend,

after much urging, then sang a pathetic ballad entitled, "She Should Be Scolded, but Not Turned Adrift," and I sat there with one eye shut, so that I could see single, and kept saying, "Per'fly beauf'ful."

About this time I commenced to forget. I remember getting an awful rise out of Estelle by remarking that her switch didn't match her hair. She came up like a human yeast cake. Johnny sided with the dame, and said I might at least try to act like a gentleman, even if I weren't one. Perhaps the grape wasn't getting to Johnny by this time. He was nobby and boss. He was dropping his r's like a Southerner, and you know how much of a Southerner Johnny is—Johnstown, Pa.; and he was hollering around about his little three-year-old, standard-bred, and registered bay mare out of Highland Belle, by Homer Wilkes, with a mark of twenty-one, that could out-trot anything of

her age that ever champed a bit. Did you get that, Jim? That ever champed a bit; and still he said at noon to-day that he had had two, possibly three, glasses of wine, but no more. The only way that mare of Johnny's can go a mile in twenty-one is "In the Baggage Coach Ahead."

Say, Jim, I've never said much about it, but you let any of these fellows who own horses get a soak on, and they get to be a kind of a village pest, with their talk about blowing up in the stretch, shoe blisters on the left forearm, etc. Now, since when did a horse get an arm? They have got me winging. I can't follow them at all.

But to return to last night. When Johnny threw that thing at me about champing the bit, it was all off to Buffalo with little Will. I went out of business right there.

When I got up this morning I had to ask the bellboy what hotel I was

in. I'll see the fellows to-night, and they'll all tell me how dirty my face was, and what I called so and so, and make me feel as bad as they possibly can. It's a wonder a fellow doesn't get used to that, but I never do; I feel meaner each time. Guess I'll take the veil.

Don't fail to come down Saturday. Several of us are going yachting on the Ohio River. It will be lovely billiards. Yours as ever,

BILLY.

P. S.—Do you know anything about that George's place?

HORSE SENSE

Sometimes you eat too much, sometimes you drink too much, and sometimes you do both. In any event, you feel like the very old scratch the next morning. Too much liquor overheats the blood. Too much food, and the liver goes on a strike. The first

remedy which should suggest itself is a purgative which will act on the liver, and cleanse the system of all the indigestible junk with which it has been overtaxed. This is positively the foundation for permanent relief. The next thing is to cool the blood. Now, isn't it common horse sense?

Think it over.

THE R—R— is the only water which acts on the liver. Its base is sodium phosphate.

THE R—R— is the only water which cools the blood. Overheated blood is what causes the pressure on the head.

THE R—R— is the only pleasant-tasting aperient water of any strength on the market to-day.

We have stumbled onto a good thing, and we've got the money to push it.

You remember the man who at breakfast said: "Waiter, bring me about ten grains of oatmeal, and put

stickers on it so that it will stay down; and say, waiter, please look as pleasant as possible, for I feel like h—l."

Well, that's how a person's stomach gets some mornings.

If you are going to drink an aperient, why try to force down a water that is warm, and tastes like a lot of bad eggs, doesn't touch your liver, and won't cool your blood, when you can get the R—R—, cold and sparkling and pleasant, which will do all these things?

If you are annoyed with constipation, stomach or liver trouble, use as your system dictates, and see how much better you feel. It can't hurt you. Best before breakfast.

IN SOCIETY

PREFACE

In presenting "In Society," we are confident of success. Upon "One Night" comment is unnecessary. A bonafide demand for nearly 250,000 copies in less than three months speaks for itself. In inclosing stamps for books, our men readers who will join the "Union" mentioned on page 36 will so state. No names attached to such communications will be published. The partial description of the grand opera "Die Walküre" in this book is given precisely as it occurred; and although the up-to-date slang used might suggest exaggeration, such is really not the case. Again we ask that your name be written plainly. This caution is not addressed to the women. We have given up all hope

of ever getting a readable signature from a woman. Don't think for a moment that we have anything against the women. Heaven forbid! We merely say that if there is a woman in the United States who can write plainly, that particular woman hasn't written us yet.

"THE BELL COW"

IN SOCIETY

PITTSBURG, PA., Feb. 1, 1899.

DEAR JIM:

There is no new scandal worth mentioning. What I started to write you about was Hemingway's duplicate whist party which was pulled off last night. I had a bid, and as there was nothing else stirring, I put on that boy's-size dress suit of mine, and blew out there. Jim, you know the signs you see on the dummies in front of these little Yiddisher stores, "Take me home for $10.98," or, "I used to be $6.21, now I'm yours for $3.39." Well, that's your Uncle Bill in a dress suit. Every one takes me for a waiter.

I have just been thinking this soci-

ety push over, and I have come to the conclusion that an active leader in society has more troubles than a man in the wheat pit, and a man in the wheat pit is long on troubles about as often as he is on wheat. If you don't believe it, ask Joe Leiter. He was long on both at the same time.

Take the woman who uses fair English and has coin, and let her display the same good cold judgment that has made her husband successful in business, and some rainy Thursday morning the four hundred will wake up and find a new member has joined the order. While she is on her way she'll get many a frost, but after she lands she'll even up on the other candidates.

I have heard it said that locomotive engineers as a rule suffer from kidney troubles, caused by the jolting and bumping of the engine. If jolts and bumps go for anything, some of these people who are trying to break into

society must have Bright's Disease something grievous.

Jim, if you have never been to a duplicate whist party, see some of those people play whist, and then order your shroud. Last night for a partner I drew an old girl who was a Colonial Dame because her ancestors on both sides had worked on the Old Colony Railroad. She must have taken a foolish powder or something, just before she left home, as she was clean to the bad. She had to be called five minutes before each play, and the way she trumped my ace the first time around was enough to drive a person dippy. Once she mentioned her husband's diamond-studded airship. Poor old lady! Probably took a double dose by mistake. How careless!

Everybody was making a great fuss over some girl who is lecturing throughout the country on "Man as Woman Sees Him." Talk about lav-

ish eyes. My boy! my boy! but this dame was there with the swell lamps. A hundred candle power easily. I tried to sit up to her, but there was nothing doing. I might have known I was a dead one. Because why? Because Mr. Percy Harold was talking to her, and he knows all about rare china, real old lace, and such things. When I came up, the subject was Du Bois' Messe de Mariage. (Spelling not guaranteed.) I asked about it this morning, Jim. A Messe de Mariage seems to be some kind of a wedding march, and a bishop who is a real hot dog won't issue a certificate unless the band plays the Messe. Mr. Percy Harold kept right on talking about Jack Hayes being so desperately in love with Mrs. Hardy-Steele, and how late they were getting home from the opera the other night, and what a shame it was, as Mr. Steele seemed like such a nice fellow. There I stood like a Harlem goat. I couldn't

cut in, because I have so many troubles of my own getting home from any place at all that I haven't time to keep tab on other people. I must be as slow getting onto a scandal as the injured husband. If 15,000 people know something about a woman, my number is 14,999, and the husband's number is 15,000. It seems strange, but the husband always seems to get wise last.

But to return to the girl with the electric eyes. I hung around in that sad dress suit like a big dub, hoping that the conversation would finally get switched to theaters or dogs or sparring, or something where I could make good, but Mr. Harold had the floor, and he certainly had me looking like a dirty deuce in a new deck. I stood for him till he suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, fudge!" because he had forgotten one of his rings, and there was where I took to the tall timbers. If I were a ring, I wouldn't let a guy like

that wear me. Now will you kindly tell me why it is that a girl will throw a good fellow down every time for one of those Lizzie boys? If I thought there were enough men in the country who feel as I do, I would start "The American Union for the Suppression of Lizzie Boys."

Well, I decided to get into my class, so I started for the smoking-room. I hadn't gone three feet till some woman held me up, and began telling me how she adored grand opera. I didn't even reply. I flew madly, and remained hidden in the tall grasses of the smoking-room until it was time to go home. Jim, should any one ever tell you that grand opera is all right, he is either trying to even up, or he is not a true friend. I was over in New York with the family last winter, and they made me go with them to "Die Walküre" at the Metropolitan Opera House. When I got the tickets, I asked the man's advice as to the best

location. He said that all true lovers of music occupied the dress circle and balconies, and that he had some good center dress-circle seats at three bones per. Here's a tip, Jim. If the box man ever hands you that true-lover game, just reach in through the little hole and soak him in the solar for me. It's coming to him. I'll give you my word of honor we were a quarter of a mile from the stage. We went up in an elevator, were shown to our seats, and who was right behind us but my old pal Bud Hathaway from Chicago. Bud had his two sisters with him, and he gave me one sad look which said plainer than words, "So you're up against it, too, eh?" We introduced all hands around, and about nine o'clock the curtain went up. After we had waited fully ten minutes, out came a big, fat, greasy-looking Dago with nothing on but a bear robe. He went over to the side of the stage, and sat down on a bum rock. It was

plainly to be seen, even from my true lover's seat, that his bearlets was sorer than a dog about something. Presently in came a woman, and none of the true lovers seemed to know who she was. Some said it was Melba, others Nordica. Bud and I decided it was May Irwin. We were mistaken, though, as Irwin has this woman lashed to the mast at any time or place. As soon as Mike the Dago espied the dame it was all off. He rushed, and drove a straight-arm jab, which had it reached would have given him the purse. But Shifty Sadie wasn't there. She ducked, side-stepped, and landed a clever half-arm hook which seemed to stun the big fellow. They clinched, and swayed back and forth, growling continually, while the orchestra played this trembly Eliza-crossing-the-ice music. Jim, I'm not swelling this a bit. On the level, it happened just as I write it. All of a sudden some one seemed to

win. They broke away, and ran wildly to the front of the stage with their arms outstretched, yelling to beat three of a kind. The band cut loose something fierce. The leader tore out about $9.00 worth of hair, and acted generally as though he had bats in his belfry. I thought sure the place would be pinched. It reminded me of Thirsty Thornton's dance-hall out in Merrill, Wisconsin, when the Silent Swede used to start a general survival of the fittest every time Mamie the Mink danced twice in succession with the young fellow from Albany, whose father owned the big mill up Rough River. Of course, this audience was perfectly orderly, and showed no intention whatever of cutting in, and there were no chairs or glasses in the air, but I am forced to admit that the opera had Thornton's faded for noise. I asked Bud what the trouble was, and he answered that I could search him. The audi-

ence apparently went wild. Everybody said, "Simply sublime!" "Isn't it grand?" "Perfectly superb!" "Bravo!" etc., not because they really enjoyed it, but merely because they thought it was the proper thing to do. After that for three solid hours Rough House Mike and Shifty Sadie seemed to be apologizing to the audience for their disgraceful street brawl, which was honestly the only good thing in the show. Along about twelve o'clock I thought I would talk over old times with Bud, but when I turned his way I found my tried and trusty comrade "Asleep at the Switch."

At the finish the woman next to me, who seemed to be on, said that the main lady was dying. After it was too late, Mike seemed kind of sorry. He must have given her the knife, or the drops, because there wasn't a minute that he could look in on her according to the rules. He laid her out on the bum rock, they set off a lot

of red fire for some unknown reason, and the curtain dropped at 12:25. Never again for my money. Far be it from me knocking, but any time I want noise I'll take to a boiler shop or a Union Station where I can understand what's coming off. I'm for a good mother show. Do you remember "The White Slave," Jim? Well, that's me. Wasn't it immense where the main lady spurned the leering villain's gold, and exclaimed with flashing eye, "Rags are royal raiment when worn for virtue's sake." Great!

"The White Slave" has "Die Walküre" beaten to a pulp, and they don't get to you for three cases gate money, either.

Say, Jim, if you ever happen to be hunting around for a real true old sport, don't overlook General Hemingway, last evening's host. When it comes to warm propositions, he is certainly the bell cow. They all follow him. He is one of those fat, bald-

headed old boys who at one time has had the smallpox so badly that he looks as though he had lost a lot of settings out of his face. He hustled for about twenty years, harnessed up a bunch of money, and now his life is one continual crimson sunset. Some people know when they have enough, but when the old general has enough he doesn't know anything. Smoke up! Jim, I didn't get that one myself the first time I heard it. Every time the general gets lit up, he places his arm around your shoulder, puts his face close to yours, blows ashes in your eyes, and tells you confidentially, so that every one in Texas can hear him, that he knew your father when the seat of his trousers was ragged, and he didn't have one dollar to rub against another. I don't mind that so much, but every time he comes to a word with the letter *P* in it, he spits all over a fellow. Why, the other night he was telling me about our

newly acquired *P*ossessions, the *P*hilippines, being a land of *P*erpetual *P*lenty, and for a while I thought I was in the natatorium. Under the circumstances I don't know which would be more desirable, a plumber for the general, or a mackintosh for myself.

Yours as ever,

BILLY.

P. S.—Jim, you know those little white checks they issue in some bars and you pay at the cashier's desk? Well, one of the boys just telephoned me that he saw Johnny Black a few minutes ago in a down-town place with a beautiful sosh on, and that he was eating his checks because he was broke. He had swallowed five checks amounting to $2.30 before the bartender tumbled. That's a new one on me, and it's all right. My! but that boy Johnny is a sincere drinker.

MORE HORSE SENSE

Sometimes you get up in the morning feeling as though you were not expected to live. You know the cause. If you are at home, the first thing to do is to square yourself. Some experts on squaring say that it is best to deny everything, others advise a partial acknowledgment of the facts, together with a solemn promise that it will never occur again. We would respectfully suggest that you try the first; if unsuccessful, spring the second, and if both fail, be a thoroughbred and take it like a man. You probably deserve it, but look at the fun you had the night before singing bass. Remember one thing: don't say you missed the twelve-o'clock car, and rather than wait you walked home. You may have arrived in a cab. Wonderful what a noise one small cab can make in the middle of the night. Well, the next thing is

your physical condition. Your liver must be got going. Would you rather drink a cold, sparkling, pleasant-tasting R—R—S— that will produce instant action upon the liver? or would you prefer a water that is warm and sickening, tastes like an Italian tenement looks, and half the time won't stay down? Many a good fellow has his own troubles in the morning trying to find something that will stick. The R—R— will stick, and what's more, it cools the blood, which naturally relieves the pressure upon the head. For constipation, stomach and liver troubles, R—R— has no equal. Being on a sodium phosphate base, it is positively the only liver water on the market to-day. Why subject yourself to probable salivation from poisonous calomel when the R—R— is absolutely harmless and will give you better results? Keep our goods at your home, and when you are away from home you can get it at any first-class hotel, café, or club.

IN LOVE

"TAILOR-MADE, CLOAK MODEL FORM, CITY BROKE KIND AND SOUND"

IN LOVE

PITTSBURG, PA., May 1, 1899.

DEAR JIM:

So you want to know how a fellow is going to tell positively when he is stuck on a girl, do you? Well, I'll tell you, and I'll tell you mighty quick. If some guy cuts in on your steady, you are going out to her home, and you are going to call her fine and plenty, aren't you? And unless she promises to bump the other fellow, you are going to leave her in a rage, aren't you? *Now, if you go back without being sent for, you're it.*

Jim, if you can, you had better wait for her to break the ice. If you don't, from that time on she will make you look like a white chip. A woman is

like one of the big trusts. The instant she acquires a controlling interest in you she becomes a regular ring-master. She will make you jump through, lie down and roll over, walk lame, and play dead; and don't think for a moment you won't do it, either. All the rest of them have. You show me a man who hasn't been up against such a game, and I'll show you a man who lacks experience. A lot of these handsome gazabes go around looking wise, winning girls out, and thinking they are the happy thought. That's because they have had a run of luck and landed in among a bunch of marks. Let them keep it up. It is only a matter of time until they will stumble over a live wire, and then it will be pay-day on the Wabash. It's grand to see a great big slob running along behind some little bit of a girl, a faithful Fido, taking his orders like a politician. I know what I'm talking about, Jim, because I have

certainly been the original human dog. I used to think I was the Village Rubber—but not any more. They have made me look like thirty cents, not once, but a dozen times. I can gaze into the dim, hazy distance and see where every one of these coy, clever fellows is going to get it, and get it good, and I am glad of it. My hat's off.

Say, Jim, I'm not much for these love stories in the books. They are liable to mislead a fellow. You read how Benton Brockway, the hero, looks into pretty Bessie Bell's blue eyes, places his hand on her shapely shoulder, and tells her how he loves her. Even her downcast eye doesn't hide the pearly tear as she answers, "Yes." Now, I can look into their eyes for four hours, and I can tell them how I love them till I am black in the face, and they seem to like it; but whenever I come to the laying of the hand on the shapely shoulder part, it's all

off. I am told that I am no gentleman, and to roll my hoop out of that house forever. What's a fellow going to do? You can never tell whether a girl is really sore or whether she is stalling. A girl might be for a fellow strong, and yet she wouldn't admit it for a thousand dollars. There may be some things I wouldn't admit for a thousand, but I don't just recall them at the present time. It only goes to show that things are not always what they seem. Many a girl wears a sailor hat who doesn't own a yacht.

Just to show you what a chance a man has nowadays: The other night I went out to see a certain girl. Won't mention any names. Never do, sober. She made what she called a Robert E. Lee punch out of apple brandy and stuff. Well, sir, after I had hit three Robert E. Lees, I could see waving green fields and fruit-laden orchards, and kind-faced old cows

standing in silvery streams of water. The drawing-room lamp looked like a flood of golden sunshine, and I couldn't remember of owing a cent. Jim, I have never been against the pipe, because I'm too young, but if it beats the Robert E. Lee punch, I'll have to go after it. I took one more dipper of Robert E. Lee, and then I decided that any girl who could make that kind of a mix could have me for better or for worse; and if I didn't propose right there, I'll eat your hat. I told her that I had loved her madly for months, but had never found the courage to say so till that night. I also mentioned the fact that even if she was very small and I was large, and even if the people in the church would say we looked like Rhode Island and Texas marching out together, that it made no difference where true love was concerned. I finished it all up with a look that would have melted the heart of a bank dealer. My work

must have been a little to the sandpaper, or I may have backed up kind of foolish like, or something. Whatever it was, she answered, "Billy, your brother's hair is a good deal darker than yours, isn't it?" Now, what do you think of that frosty-hearted fairy? Literally forced me to drink that punch, gets me ripened up, and then throws the hooks into me. As a lovemaker I guess I am a shine. Jim, have you ever gone home late at night and told yourself in front of the mirror how you loved some girl? and have you ever seen that same girl walking along the street the next day with another fellow, and the instant you discovered them, did a great big lump come into your breast? And did you immediately think of a lot of things about the fellow you didn't like, although previously you had rather admired him? Well, that thing you get in your breast is what we experts call the love lump, and you were

placing yourself in a position to later on become a kind of Patsy to that girl.

Isn't that love lump all the money, though? It makes a well-developed case of indigestion look like a sunny summer day. When you come to figure it all over, there's nothing to that jealousy thing. I used to be Billy Brighteyes, and sneak out to my regular's home, thinking that perhaps I would catch some one else there. What do I do now? Why, I telephone that I will be out in thirty minutes. What you don't know won't hurt you.

Jim, what has ever become of that girl you were so crazy about a couple of years ago? I guess maybe she didn't put a dent into your heart that a person could drive a four-in-hand into and never touch the sides, a regular Hoosac Tunnel. Then when she had you all ribbed up and done to a turn, she said: "I love Mr. Hawkins, and Mr. Hawkins loves me. Good

by, Jim; take care of yourself." You couldn't have gotten a better jolt on the B. & O. You will pardon my suppressed merriment, but that girl certainly made you look like a trailer. Never mind, Jim, old pal, we have all had a crimp put into us at one time or another, and if you work hard and observe good hours you'll get over it in four or five years. It's nothing at all.

I have often thought I would land a girl with coin, blow business, and sit around for a while. It would be great to have your own hearthstone, with a couple of registered St. Bernards lying around, and here and there a golden-haired darling romping and playing with a bottle of paregoric. But somehow or other I always fall down. Now, take that Katherine Clark, who has been visiting the Hemingways for the past month. When she first came, I said to myself, "Billy, my boy, here's your chance; break in

and cop out an heiress." So I sicked myself on to her. Well, you know I'm not a piker. I went after her right. Eats, drinks, shows, and all the expensive things. I touched Johnny Black's brother-in-law for fifty, and gave an informal luncheon that was a pippin. I wore my New York Central shirt with the four stripes, and we had wine with cobwebs. There wasn't a thing served that any one could pronounce, and Johnny Black got loaded and told us on the quiet why his sister had left her husband. I insulted Johnny by making some remark about his joining the Tell Club, and altogether everything was a big success. The check came to $44.60, and I flashed Johnny's brother-in-law's fifty. When the waiter brought the five-forty change I waved him away as though the Standard Oil Company was the smallest thing I owned. The tip was out that old man Clark was black with money, and if

it's so, I know why. He is tight-ribbed and popcorn. Down in George's Place the other day I asked the old man what he was going to drink, and he said he would rather have the money. And say, he gave me a cigar that looked as though it had some skin trouble, and smelled like some one was shoeing a horse. However, a fellow doesn't *always* have to live with the bride's parents. Jim, this girl was a dream. Tailor-made, cloak-model form, city-broke, kind, and sound. She could just naturally beat the works out of a piano; and talk about your swell valves. Why, the other night she sang "A Sailor's Life's the Life for Me" so realistically that Johnny Black got seasick. Well, to make a long story short, this morning I got an invitation to Katherine Clark's wedding. Jim, did you ever have a fellow come up behind you and smear you back of the ear when you weren't looking? Well, that's exactly

how that invitation felt. She is going to marry some lobster out in St. Louis, and I'll bet he is a pup, and is marrying her for her money. I figured it up on the back of the invitation, and that lady sent me along for just two hundred and ten dollars, not counting what I owe Johnny Black's brother-in-law; and the best I get is a "come to the church." Of course you will say I'm stung again, and that some one should lead me out to the end of the Chicago Crib and push me into the lake, and all that sort of rot; but hang it all, Jim, if I could get that girl I would take her if she didn't have a cent. I guess I'll light my pipe. Yours as ever,

BILLY.

P. S.—"Good by, Jim; take care of yourself."

MORE HORSE SENSE

Have you ever sat on the edge of the bed in the morning with your elbows on your knees, your head buried in your hands, and wondered if there was anything you overlooked the night before that would have made you feel worse? Among the more polite, this feeling is spoken of as the realization of indiscretion in diet; but we plain people call it old Colonel R. E. Morse. There are lots of things that will give you a Colonel, but a R—R—S— is the only thing that will make you feel like a person with a future instead of a person with a past. You must cleanse your liver, and that's all there is to it. Here's the proposition: Say there were two glasses of aperient water standing on a table. One was muddy-looking, bad-tasting, warm, and flat, and wouldn't touch your liver. The other was clear, pleasant-tasting, cold,

and sparkling, and acted instantly upon your liver. Which would you take? Inasmuch as our circulation is confined entirely to the most intelligent, all we ask is, that you give this proposition one moment of your thought. The immense sale of R—R—S— proves beyond a doubt that the American people are thoroughly disgusted with vile-tasting foreign bitter waters, and were merely awaiting the advent of something new and sparkling, like R—R—.

IN NEW YORK

PREFACE

"In New York" is the last of the Baxter Letters for the present. We think it well to stop before we get bad. We make but one claim for distinction—the largest circulation America has ever seen or heard of. The people, up to date, have actually demanded over three and a half million copies, or nearly five car-loads of our little books, and there is no telling where it will stop. We have Robinson Crusoe backed clear off his island, and Uncle Tom's Cabin burned to the ground. Still it would have been a different story had we asked a dollar apiece for our books; so we are not so much after all.

"CLOSE HARMONY"

IN NEW YORK

PITTSBURG, PA., August, 1899.

DEAR JIM:

Just got back from New York this morning. Bud Hathaway stopped off here on his way from Chicago, and coaxed Johnny Black and me to go over East with him. We went, and a pretty mess we made of it. Bud is sore on both of us, I got touched for ninety, and Johnny is lost.

Nothing of interest occurred going over on the train, excepting that when I turned in I took off my trousers without spilling my money all over the Pullman floor. This is done by sewing the human pocket shut. We landed at Twenty-third Street, in good shape, early in the morning of

the day before yesterday. When we reached the Pennsylvania cab-stand some one had taken the hansom, so we had to hire a carriage. They are building another hansom, and then there will be plenty of hansoms for all. At the hotel Johnny claimed I had a drag because I drew a room with a window in it. Breakfast was hardly over until Bud, without consulting us at all, commenced arrangements for giving a swell dinner to a couple of heiresses who lived on Eighteenth Street and who were worth eight millions, or who lived in Eighth Street and were worth eighty millions—Johnny and I didn't know which. Bud gave us a lot of hot air about his mother's cousin standing fifteen balls in the New York Four, and how that made him a non-resident member, and if we did just as he said, he would put us in right. He told us that there were thousands of people right in New York City, any one of whom would

give a cool million for our opportunity. Johnny immediately began to figure on how he would treat certain people over in Pittsburg who had given him the eye in bygone days; and I got so struck on myself that I cut the head waiter dead, although I had known him intimately for years. Along about 11 A.M. the deal went through by 'phone for seven o'clock that evening. Bud went to get shaved, and Johnny and I retired to the bar to wait until it was time to get ready for the dinner.

Well, sir, I never met so many people in all my life as we met in that bar. There was a wine agent whom everybody called Dick, and I'm for Dick. He sapped up all kinds of booze except wine, like four dollars' worth of blue blotters, and every time he took a drink he raised his salary a thousand dollars a year. Once I weakened, and went outside and watched the hotel lobby go around for

a while. When I returned, Johnny Black, Dick the wine agent, and a large red-faced man who looked as though he had helped to made Milwaukee famous, and who said he was from K. C., Mizzoo, were doing some close harmony that was great. The three of them were bunched with their arms resting on each others' shoulders, singing "She May Have Seen Better Days," and the way they all looked up toward heaven was something pathetic. Whenever they came to a barber shop minor they would hold it for a full minute, and then they would all stop and tell each other how good they were. Suddenly a fellow rushed in through the street door and breathlessly exclaimed: "My goodness gracious, sakes alive! the undertow almost carried me beyond the bar." The newcomer still wore his dress suit from the evening before, and his shirt front was all spattered with egg. He was promptly named

"His Chickens." His Chickens did a trick with a wine-glass and a half-dollar, and finally succeeded in cutting a gash in his wrist an inch long. Johnny Black, who was rapidly becoming normal, remarked that His Chickens was the village cut-up. I laughed so loud at Johnny's shine joke that the manager of the hotel called me, and the whole tribe got insulted and told the man his place was no good anyhow.

We started out, and the first thing we did was to strike one of those foolish cabs. We made a bargain for a dollar and a half the first hour and a dollar each succeeding hour, and then we fell in and told the pilot to take us all over New York. He said he would, and from the way I feel, he did. K. C. started an awful argument in one place by declaring that a straight should beat a flush because there were only eight chances to fill a straight, while with a flush there were

nine. I never figured it out before, but K. C. is right.

In another place we met a Philadelphia-looking sort of a fellow with a soft hat, a Prince Albert coat with narrow braid on it, and a couple of those little bow-legged dogs with the long ears and their stomachs away down on the ground. They call them Dasch hounds, or something, and I can't for the life of me see what anybody would want with such fool-looking dogs. They look as though they had been born under a bureau or in a New York hotel room, where you have to close the folding bed to find your clothes, or in the Boston baseball grounds. The dog man said he used to know a George Black years ago in Johnstown, Pa., who was a puddler in the mills there. Johnny answered: "That's my father. He is manager of those mills now, and what's more, he can lick any man in Cambria County, just the same as I can lick any

man in New York City." The last was announced in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard all over the place. Jim, I got it four times just from the overflow. Now, you know merely because Johnny's father can lick any man in Cambria Country, is that any reason why I should land out in the middle of the car track? Not at all.

Along about ten in the evening Bud wanted to keep the seven-o'clock-dinner date with the heiresses, but the rest of the gang were too busy. We blew into one of those concert halls over on Eighth Avenue, where they have sand on the floor, red-white-and-blue tissue paper around the edge of the ceiling, no programme because it costs too much, and a bum piano for an orchestra. The Professor wore no coat, but he certainly knew his way around the ivories. A sad-looking, thin guy, with a four days' growth and a large near-diamond stud, came out and announced that the next turn was

the feature of the evening—the winsome Sisters Montclair, who would sing a lovely waltz ballad written expressly for them, entitled, "The Check Was Forged—He Had Went Too Far." Johnny Black set 'em up to the Professor right in the middle of the song, and the Professor bowed his regards, blew the froth off his beer, drank it, and lit a cigarette without losing a note. Immediately after the act, the Professor presented Miss Alice Montclair of the famous "Sisters Montclair." Barring the fact that Miss Montclair had a mouth like a cave, she wasn't a bad looker. Old K. C. gave what was intended for a tender, loving look, and asked her if he could call her Alice; then without waiting for an answer, passed into a Rip Van Winkle that looked good for a hundred years.

We told the lady it was up to her, and she said she would take a brandy and soda. Brandy and soda being

fifty a throw and beer five a copy, we told her to behave, and ordered the waiter to back her up a tub of suds, Texas size. I noticed Miss Montclair's handkerchief was marked "Mary Burke." Probably some mistake on the part of the laundry. Careless laundry! Alice told us what lovely people her folks were; she said her father was mayor of his town, and if we only knew her real name it would surprise us all. Johnny Black started to guess it, but was interrupted by having to settle for the last round His Chickens had ordered. It seems His Chickens would madly order, and then when the waiter would kind of hang around for the price, he would do the earnest conversation gag until some one else had made good. Alice, who was now getting a trifle weary, went on to tell us that the girl who appeared with her was not her sister, and that the only reason she stood for her at all was because she had once been

good to her when she was sick. All of a sudden old K. C., who had been leaning over farther and farther, did a Brodie out of his chair and lit on his eye. We dug him out of the sand and put him back where he belonged, and he immediately departed into another dreamless but jumpy slumber. At this juncture somebody sold Dick six tickets at a dollar per for a ball that had been given over a month ago by the Varnish Makers' Union, K. of L., No. 229. Upon learning that he had been bunked, Dick became very dignified, and said he would remember the fellow perfectly, and that the day would come when they would be brought face to face.

We were all getting along great; everybody was calling Alice by her first name, and Alice was saying, "I'll leave it to Bill if it ain't right," and speaking of Manager Frohman as Charley, when Johnny Black, the president of all the trouble-makers,

spoiled the whole business. It appears that Alice's eyelids were slightly granulated. It was barely noticeable, and nobody but a dog like Johnny would have mentioned such a thing. Anyway, Johnny suggested that the lady's granulated eyelids were probably caused by looking for a rise in "Sugar." Jim, you should have seen Alice go up? Johnny certainly cut her weights fine and proper. Of course, Johnny was batting under two hundred, but for some unknown reason we all got the blue pencil. She called Johnny an illy bred, low-born, undersized, cavery-faced Protestant pup. Johnny was so excited he couldn't get back at all. He just sputtered and spit and made motions with his mouth. It was grand and touching and refined. I cut in and tried to square it, and the lady told me I was a spangle-eyed big dub. I'll bet that's one of the worst things a fellow can be. Dick was then told

what he was, and he put it down in a book, after which Alice finished it all up with a flood of tears. The head waiter came up and said: "Look a here, Mary, what ails you, anyway? You're getting so lately you turn them tears on every night. Be a good fellow, and don't make a lot of gents think we're running a morgue. You've blowed half your make-up as it is." Mary, alias Alice, gave the head waiter one withering look, and left the place. We started to move on, but found it was impossible to bring old K. C. back. We pounded him and yelled at him for ten minutes, but there wasn't a leaf stirring, except once, when he came to long enough to remark that he was sweating like a June bride. We finally took his watch and all his money but two dollars, and left him like a dog. A fellow is perfectly safe in New York without any money.

We then mounted our deep-sea-

going cab, and told the skipper we were for the eats. He took us to a big restaurant on upper Sixth Avenue. We told the waiter to bring us everything that was good. When the waiter returned with the knives and forks, he also brought us some Dill pickles. I took a bite at one of them, and she squirted and hit a fellow at the next table in the eye. I guess a Dill pickle must smart right pert—however, I won't bore you with any details. Jim, I can remember that just at the start of it a waiter happened to be passing with a very large order on his tray, and for a while the air was literally crowded with oyster stews, Welsh rarebits, glasses, showers of booze, frogs' legs, and everything that wasn't chained down. When the smoke cleared away I was occupying my regular position in the center of the car track. They wouldn't let me in again, and the rest of the fellows were too hungry to come out; so there I

was "Alone in New York." The cabman then asked for his money for the whole day. I told him that the lack of money was the least of my troubles, and I went down after ninety dollars that I had pinned in my trousers watch-pocket with a safety pin. Exit money. Whoever got to me hadn't even left the safety pin. The cabman made some remarks about taking it out of my hide, and I spent all of twenty minutes proving to him that the rest of the bunch would settle when they came out. I then walked all the way down to the hotel, alone and hungry. In my whole life I never met such a quarrelsome lot of people. You know yourself, Jim, that any one who can guess when a Dill pickle is going to squirt is entitled to the barrel of flour, or the gold-plated oil stove; and as far as that ninety is concerned, I suppose I went in front of the City Hall and presented it to somebody. I'll bet, all told, I've

been in a hundred scraps in New York, and have never won a battle. I'll win out yet, if I have to go out and beat up a poor old apple-woman.

Say, Jim, the greatest game in New York is to walk into some hotel palm-room with a particularly swell girl and watch all the rest of them get jealous. You know that Harper girl from Louisville? Well, I showed her around New York a couple of months ago, and she made them all look like a summer resort on a rainy day. When we entered any of the big restaurants I would send her along ahead, and I would trail to hear the cracks. It was grand to see them rubber and hear the women say, "She isn't so much," or, "My, isn't she padded frightfully!" and hear the men say "Gee! A dream," or, "Pipe, Dan, I guess she's perfectly miserable, eh?" I lost two or three sets of studs that trip just from swelling up.

Well, I'm home, and here I am

going to stay. Just on the quiet, I never felt so bad in my life. I'm all sore and stiff from that car-track habit, and talk about your jumps! Why, a minute ago I was sitting as quiet as a lamb, when without the slightest warning, I did a leap straight up into the air about four feet. I wonder what causes that? Coming down to the office this morning somebody kept calling me continually, and when I would look around there wouldn't be a soul near, and I am all the time hearing bands of music, and maybe I am not perspiring!

If I ever get over this, that narrow-path gag for your Uncle Bill for a long time to come. When you get to throwing your money away there is nothing doing. Far be it from me casting up, neither am I a hard loser, but I certainly could use that ninety. Well, that'll be about all.

Yours as ever,

BILLY.

P. S.—Just received the following telegram from Johnny Black, dated New York, 1:50 P. M.: "Old K. C. has just been sighted. She's a little dismantled, but game. She's arranging for a foolisher for a whole week, and I am going to stay with him. Dick sends best. Chickens has a roll."

I wired Johnny as follows: "If you see a safety pin anywhere around Chickens, that roll belongs to me."

JOHNNY BLACK'S GIRL

"SMILING UP AT HIM JUST AS SHE USED TO"

JOHNNY BLACK'S GIRL

PITTSBURG, PA., July 1, 1899.

DEAR JIM:

I have something to tell you, and it's not necessary to stand on the courthouse steps at high noon and do the human phonograph act, as it's strictly under your bonnet. One evening about three years ago, before Johnny and I had moved to our new flat, I had turned in kind of early, as I had been to the Cabinet-Makers' Ball at Turner's Hall the night before, and it had been a great success. I was wakened by Johnny beating me and asking me to shake hands. He was dancing around like a crazy man, and as soon as I fairly got my eyes opened I guessed the cause. Little

Nellie Morrison had told him she loved him, and they were engaged. My! but Johnny was happy and important. Well, sir, he just kept me up till two o'clock, telling me all their plans. It wasn't very hard to do, either, for although I tried to appear kind of careless, I was as much excited as Johnny. It was just six months later that poor little Nell was taken out dead from that big wreck over East. Well, now comes the trouble. Johnny Black loves that little girl just as much as he did the day she was brought back home. So far as the boys are concerned, he has hidden it fairly well. They think he is over it, but, Jim, he's getting worse. Last night I came in about twelve, and there sat Johnny curled up in the big chair you gave me last Christmas. He had cried himself to sleep, and in his hand was a picture of Nell. There she was in a little

white dress, smiling up at him just as she used to before it all happened. I leaned over and touched him as gently as I could, and said, "Come on to bed, Johnny." He never answered a word. He placed the picture in his pocket, and I led him off to his room. He didn't speak until just before he put out his light, and then he said: "You know, Bill, I used to tell her all my schemes, and she was so kind, and how she *did* want to see me a success! You know how things are coming, Bill, and I'd like to see her just a minute and have her cuddle up and say, 'I knew my boy was all right.' " What was I going to do? I don't know anything about consoling people, so I just said, "Never mind, Johnny; you and I'll take a trip and try to forget it." Jim, it's been over two years now, and he loves her more than ever. What I want you to do is to write him and tell him to take a rest. He can

afford it easily enough. Every time he looks at anything somebody gallops in and hands him a check. Do this, will you, Jim?

Yours as ever,

BILLY.

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